

Housing crisis Britain



The enduring legacy - and the stain - of Rachman

Comment

By Andy McSmith



THE SIXTIES were not all swinging. Thousands were trapped in appalling, overcrowded accommodation because there were not enough homes for a growing population and almost no legislation to protect tenants from unscrupulous landlords.

The most notorious was Peter Rachman, who owned slum properties in London, particularly around Notting Hill, which had a growing population of immigrants recently arrived from the Caribbean, in an era when there was no law to prevent landlords from operating a colour bar.

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His tenants paid because they

Ill health threatens Dale Farm eviction

By Kevin Rawlinson

RESIDENTS OF Dale Farm, the UK's largest Travellers' site, were warning last night that five members of the community threatened with eviction in 12 days are suffering from severe illnesses. They say that the health of some could worsen should bailiffs move in.

Included in medical reports being prepared by residents and their supporters is the case of one man said to be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder following the death of his eight-year-old son. They say the man had a stroke last Friday and has a heart condition.

Another resident is reported to be suffering from septicaemia in both lungs, as well as bowel cancer, severe asthma, and has a "potentially fatal" case of nasal polyps. A third resident is said to have "diabetes, arthritis, angina and low levels of iron in his blood". He is also reported to have limited mobility and to be suffering from memory loss.

According to the reports, a fourth has kidney and eye problems while a fifth has been advised



A series of
aids in east
London
yesterday
targeted
so-called
'super-sheds'
in gardens of
seemingly
normal
terraced
houses, far left
DANIEL LYNCH

By Andy McSmith

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His tenants paid because they had nowhere else to go. The rules that restricted how much rent a new tenant could be charged had been abolished by the Conservative government in 1957 and if they did not pay, they received a visit from Mr Rachman's heavies.

But what is possibly the worst aspect of the story is Mr Rachman was never exposed during his life and became famous after his death only because very late in life he met a young prostitute called Christine Keeler. She was the woman who had a brief affair with the Secretary of State for War, John Profumo.

In going through every aspect of Keeler's life the tabloids discovered what Rachman had been up to. The details scandalised the nation, but it was too late to call him to account. He had died in 1962, unnamed, unshamed, and very rich. No one knows how many other unscrupulous landlords were operating at the same time who did not make the newspapers.

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According to the reports, a fourth has kidney and eye problems, while a fifth has been advised by her doctor that her throat cancer may have returned, potentially threatening her life. The woman has been advised to avoid stress

One has bowel cancer, nasal polyps and septicaemia. Another has diabetes, arthritis, memory loss and angina

and is said to be "agitated" by the prospect of being evicted.

The Travellers plan to submit the reports to the local council, arguing that they should be taken into

account before the site is cleared by force. Basildon Council said the Travellers, who own the land but do not have planning permission for some of the buildings on it, are to be evicted in the week commencing 19 September. Reports suggested yesterday that the community had offered to sell the land to the council and go quietly for £6m but were turned down by the council leader, Tony Ball.

One Dale Farm resident, Mary Flynn, applied for an injunction against the evictions in the High Court last week on ground of her own ill health. The community hoped any judgment in her favour would be extended to all 80 of the families living on the site.

However, the judge turned down their application and Basildon Council agreed to give a legal undertaking to review fresh medical evidence relating to Ms Flynn before proceeding against her. She was given seven days to produce a report of her worsening medical condition, which ran out yesterday, and a decision on her case was expected late last night. The community hopes to add the new cases to Ms Flynn's submission.

A spokesman for Basildon Council said the medical submissions would be considered.

s, Shelter blamed a lack of government action on housing for the rise in the number of super-sheds built.

These super-sheds are one example of how so many people aren't able to access a decent and affordable home. Many have no option but to turn to these places," said Mr Rashleigh. High prices are meaning that people are struggling to find the kind of accommodation that is suitable for their needs. This is an extreme example of something that is affecting a large number of people."

One of the biggest casualties of the Government's spending cuts, with some of the most vulnerable members of society paying the heaviest price for a financial crisis brought on by bankers.

That we are also moving to a world where unscrupulous landlords operate at a rate as better landlords. Councils will not be in a position to regulate this effectively. The problem that is going to be identified," he said.

He says the crisis is where housing is becoming more of a commodity than a right. The cost of housing is higher than in any other part of the country. The problem is that the government is not doing enough to address this. The problem is that the government is not doing enough to address this. The problem is that the government is not doing enough to address this.

A lone parent with two children working six hours a week will be £8,434 in London compared to £9,482 nationally.

There is expected to be an increase of between 30,000 and 34,000 households in the capital every year for the next 25 years, a high proportion of which will be single-person households.

The number of families on waiting lists in London doubled to 362,000 between 1997 and 2010 - and now accounts for more than 20 per cent of the national waiting list. Yet more than 6,000 council homes are empty in London, nearly a third because they need repairs, with more than 2,300 going without tenants for more than a year.

Only bold measures will fix this crisis

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